

3.0 AFFECTED ENVIRONMENT

3.9 Cultural Resources and Native American Concerns

3.9.1 Ethnographic and Historic Overview

The geographic area addressed by this CDCA Plan Amendment was inhabited by the Cahuilla prior to the founding of the Spanish missions along the coast in 1769. During the subsequent century, the Cahuilla became increasingly familiar with Spanish, Mexican, and Euro-American cultures, while maintaining the integrity of their own culture. In 1877, reservations were established in Southern California, and access to lands off-reservation became increasingly difficult to the Cahuilla; nevertheless, the religious and cultural importance of landscapes, places, and resources off-reservation was remembered. The CDCA Plan Amendment is being developed with consideration of potential effects of planning actions on religious and cultural values of the Cahuilla, and the neighboring Serrano, and is consistent with the National Historic Preservation Act and implementing regulations at 36 CFR 800.

Cahuilla history has a religious as well as a secular component because the Cahuilla world view does not separate the two. Their homeland is defined by events associated with the first people and with later events which occurred during the settlement of the territory by socio-political subdivisions (clans and lineages). Landscape features (such as mountains, rock formations, and boulders) and natural resources (such as springs and certain animals, birds and reptiles) may have religious significance, as may specific places inhabited by clans and lineages which are marked by cultural artifacts and features such as pictographs.

The religion of the Cahuilla addresses the beginning of the universe, life forces, and all creatures. Some of the earliest beings are embodied in rock formations, boulders, and other aspects of nature. Other natural features commemorate specific events involving earliest beings. Another aspect of Cahuilla religion is that some of the earliest created beings exist in transformed states in nature and these transformed states are associated with springs, mountain sheep, deer, bears, mountain lions, eagles, desert tortoise, and other elements of the environment. Other natural features and locations may be notable because they were integral to song cycles which are an important aspect of Cahuilla history and culture. Such natural resources, including their treatment and management, are important to the Cahuilla.

As each lineage territory was established, the founding religious leader named landscape features which bounded and comprised the territory. Each lineage recognized a tract of land with a range of biotic resources which provided food, medicine, and other raw materials, and all resources within the tract were used to a greater or lesser degree. Within each tract, a village settlement was located near a dependable source of water and within reasonable range for procuring staple foods. Village sites with their religious features and human burials, including grave sites, of historically important Cahuilla, and historic-religious context area important places.

Places of transitory residence were located at some distance from the village. Included among these sites are caves which were used for residential and religious purposes. Trails connecting residential sites, special use sites, and resources are also of importance.

Residential villages of the Cahuilla who lived in areas west and north of the desert have been recorded in many publications. Strong (1929) published a list of Cahuilla clans and their locations, which included: Indian Wells, Andreas Canyon, Palm Springs, Whitewater Bridge, Blaisdell Canyon, Snow Creek Canyon, Stubby Canyon, Banning Water Canyon, and San Timeteo Canyon. He also listed several lineages and as many as twenty villages in Coyote Canyon, at Santa Rosa, and at the bases of Cahuilla and Thomas Mountains. James (1960:46-47) listed some Cahuilla villages at: the entrance to Stubbe, Whitewater, Snow Creek, Blaisdell, Andreas, Chino, Tahquitz, and Deep Canyons; at Palm Springs Station; around the hot springs in Palm Springs, Toro and Santa Rosa Peaks; New Santa Rosa; a half mile east of Horse Canyon; and , in the 1870's, around the warm springs five miles west of Anza. Bean (1991) described places in the San Jacinto and Santa Rosa mountain regions, such as, San Gorgonio Pass and Whitewater Canyon; the Palm Springs area; Palm, Andreas, Murray, Martinez, and Toro Canyons; and the Santa Rosa and Rockhouse Canyon areas.

The north western portion of the plan area falls within the traditional lands of the Serrano. The Serrano apparently inhabited the San Bernardino Mountains and areas to the north. Specifically they may have inhabited the Big and Little Morongo Canyon and Mission Creek areas (Bean and Smith 1978; Daly, Davis, and Lerch 1981; Kroeber 1925). Bean and Smith (1978:570) state that it is “nearly impossible to assign definitive boundaries for Serrano territory due both to Serrano sociopolitical organizational features and to a lack of reliable data.”

The term “Serrano” derives from the Spanish for “mountaineers” (Bean and Smith 1978; Kroeber 1925). The Serrano speak a dialect of the Takic sub-family of the Uto-Aztekan language group. This dialect is distinct from that of their Cahuilla neighbors, but Serrano technology, subsistence practices and sociopolitical organization were very similar to that of the Cahuilla. The Serrano in the plan area were divided into two moieties: the Wildcats and the Coyotes. The moieties were further divided into clans and lineages. During the historic period, Cahuilla and Serrano groups were allied by trade and intermarriage. Many Serrano currently reside on the Morongo Reservation with the Cahuilla.

The Mission Creek and Morongo areas appear to have been shared by the Cahuilla and Serrano. Bean, Vane, and Young (1991) report that a Cahuilla lineage occupied Mission Creek. Other sources (Daly, Davis, and Lerch 1981) document that a Serrano clan occupied the village of Yamisevul in Mission Creek.

The Mission Creek Reservation was established in 1876. It was later returned to public domain due to a lack of Indian inhabitants. The reservation was reestablished and expanded in 1908, divided into allotments during 1925 through 1927, and disbanded in

1969. The former reservation is currently privately owned while surrounding lands are under management of the BLM.

The Mission Creek area was relatively free of White intrusion until the mid nineteenth century. The opening of the Bradshaw Road and the Colorado Stage and Express Line in 1862 led to an increase in Euroamerican travel through San Geronimo Pass and the plan area in general. The Bradshaw Trail was developed initially to serve the mining camps at La Paz. Bradshaw developed the portion of the trail which runs through the plan area with assistance from members of Cahuilla chief Cabezon's village. The route runs south of the Orocopia mountains and north of Dos Palmas and is also referred to as the Cocomaricopa or Maricopa-Cahuilla trail (Warren and Roske 1981). Frink's Route was another east to west trail established prior to Bradshaw's trail and portions of it were followed by Bradshaw. Stage and wagon stops were typically located near springs or other water sources. The Southern Pacific Rail Road was constructed in 1875 and 1876. Increased travel through the Coachella Valley led to an increase in the rate of culture change and cultural disruption among the Cahuilla and Serrano.

Mining played a small role in the history of the Coachella Valley. Historic mines located on lands currently managed by the BLM include clay, fluorospar, gold, and talc mines. The most common mining activity in the plan area at this time is for sand and gravel. The Colorado River Aqueduct was constructed through the plan area during the 1930's. Historic sites associated with workers' residential camps are located in the foothills of the Little San Bernardino Mountains. Activities associated with Patton's Desert Training Center also occurred on BLM managed lands within the Coachella Valley. The Desert Training Center was opened in 1942 with its Division Headquarters at Camp Young near Chiriaco Summit. Maneuvers were conducted on both sides of what is now Interstate 10 and in the lands south of the Orocopia Mountains.

3.9.2 Section 106 Compliance

Section 106 of the National Historic Preservation Act (NHPA) of 1966 directed federal agencies to take into account the effects of their undertakings on historic properties—those archaeological and historic sites already listed on the National Register of Historic Places. Executive Order 11593 (1979) instructed federal agencies to identify properties, determine if they were eligible for the National Register, and evaluate the potential effects from proposed undertakings. As a result of EO 11593, eligible properties were to be treated with the same respect as sites already listed on the National Register.

Following implementation of the NHPA and EO 11593, federal agencies required that cultural resources inventories be conducted in advance of the approval of undertakings. The majority of large-area cultural resources inventories on BLM managed lands in the Coachella Valley occurred in the late 1970's and early 1980's. This period also corresponds with the development of wind energy and the construction of major powerlines through the valley. Since the late 1980's nearly all inventories have been

conducted for compliance with Section 106 of the NHPA and are primarily associated with development or land exchange proposals.

Cultural resources surveys from the late 1970's through the present all appear to meet current standards. Transect width varies from 10 meters to 45 meters. One survey project included some "windshield survey" but this approach was used only in areas with a low potential for historic properties. Many surveys conducted in the Coachella Valley have assumed that active floodplains would present little potential for intact or significant cultural resources and have therefore excluded these areas or have used wider transects to cover them. The topography of the Coachella Valley also includes extremely steep slopes. Steep areas have typically been excluded from inventory. The only apparent weakness of early surveys was the quality of site records that were prepared. The majority of site forms were completed during or before the 1970's and consist of a single page with minimal information and may not include sketch maps or accurate location maps. There is a need to revisit and update site forms for archaeological sites in the Coachella Valley. Many of the sites may have been destroyed by the development that prompted their recordation. Wilke (1976) completed an overview of the human ecology of Ancient Lake Cahuilla and the Coachella Valley and feels that many of the sites he studied in the 1970's have been destroyed as a result of development (Wilke 2002). Section 110 of the National Historic Preservation Act calls for federal agencies to identify and preserve historic properties under their jurisdiction. Cultural resources inventories which are not driven by proposed projects or undertakings are typically referred to as "110 surveys". Very little of this type of inventory has occurred on BLM managed lands in the Coachella Valley. A systematic sample survey was conducted in conjunction with the California Desert Conservation Act planning effort in the late 1970's. Twenty-seven of these sample units, a total of approximately 2300 acres of survey, fell on lands which are still managed by the BLM. Since that time it appears that less than 100 acres of non-project related survey has been conducted in the CDCA plan amendment study area.

A total of approximately 35,590 acres of cultural resources inventories have been conducted on BLM managed lands in the Coachella Valley plan area. This represents approximately 10% of the total acreage of BLM lands. Approximately 204 archaeological sites have been recorded. The majority of these are prehistoric sites containing artifacts and features such as lithics, ceramics, bone, beads, bedrock mortars, hearths, rock walls or alignments, agave roasting pits, and cairns. Historic sites include can and bottle concentrations and structure foundations. In addition there are 25 linear sites. The majority of these are trails which are generally interpreted as prehistoric in origin since prehistoric artifacts are commonly found along them. The Bradshaw Trail and Coachella Canal are two historic linear sites within the planning area. An additional 35 sites were identified as a result of inventories conducted in support of this planning effort. Twenty-nine prehistoric sites were recorded, including two trails. Six historic sites were recorded.

Table 3-7: Cultural Sites Located on BLM-Managed Lands

	Prehistoric Sites	Historic Sites	Linear Sites	Incomplete Site Records
Sites Located on BLM Managed Lands	172	18	27	22

Examination of site location and elevation data indicates that the majority of recorded sites on BLM managed lands in the plan area occur in the Lower Sonoran life zone. This would be consistent with ethnographic data that places Cahuilla village sites within this life zone on valley floors or near the mouth of canyons (Bean, Vane and Young, 1991). Recent archaeological survey also indicates an extensive use of the Ancient Lake Cahuilla shoreline (Schaefer, Palette, And Bean 1993). However, it is important to remember that BLM lands tend to occur at lower elevations and recorded sites correlate primarily with the locations of cultural resources inventories. Also note that linear sites are not accounted for in the following table since they frequently cross two or more life zones.

Table 3-8: Sites Located on BLM-Managed Lands by Life Zone

	Ancient Lake Cahuilla Shoreline + 50 Feet	Lower Sonoran Life zone	Upper Sonoran Life Zone
Number of sites	59	141	12

Historic properties are those cultural resources which are found to be eligible for listing on the National Register of Historic Places (NRHP). The National Register Criteria for Evaluation can be found at 36 CFR 60.4. The quality of significance in American history, architecture, archaeology, engineering and culture is present in districts, sites, buildings, structures and objects that possess integrity of location, design, setting, materials, workmanship, feeling and association, and:

- (a) Are associated with events that have made a significant contribution to the broad patterns of our history; or
- (b) Are associated with the lives of persons significant in our past; or
- (c) Embody the distinctive characteristics of a type, period or method of construction, that represent the work of a master, that possess high artistic values, or that represent a significant and distinguishable entity whose components may lack individual distinction; or
- (d) Have yielded or may be likely to yield information important in prehistory or history.

Few sites in the plan area have been formally evaluated for their eligibility to be listed on the National Register. One site, Rancho Dos Palmas, was determined to not be eligible. Two districts, Rockhouse and Martinez Canyons, are currently being proposed for NRHP listing. Currently the Martinez Canyon Rockhouse is the only NRHP listed property on BLM-managed lands. The Rockhouse, also known as Jack Miller's Cabin, was constructed around 1930 and is an example of a vernacular style rock dwelling. Few of these rock cabins remain in the Colorado Desert. The Rockhouse was listed on the NRHP under Criterion C. One National Register listed site, the Coachella Valley Fish Traps, occurs on lands not managed by the BLM but within a proposed trail corridor.

Existing site forms generally provide too little information to make decisions regarding the potential for a site to contain significant information. It is also difficult to assess the integrity of sites from existing records. Review of site forms on file at the Palm Springs-South Coast Field Office and available through the California Historic Resources Information System (CHRIS) indicate that there are several sites that may have the potential to meet one or more of the eligibility criteria. Several others consist of surface concentrations of a single artifact or feature type and have little potential to contribute significantly to our understanding of the past. These are listed as "Not Eligible" in Table 3-9. Table 3-9 reflects the contents of the existing database.

Table 3-9: Eligibility Status of Recorded Sites

	Unevaluated / Insufficient information	Not Eligible	Eligible / Warrant Additional Study	Determined Not Eligible
Recorded sites	90	90	57	1

The Native American Heritage Commission was contacted and a sacred lands file search was conducted for the lands included in the Coachella Valley plan area. Several historic cemeteries and geographic features or areas were reported to be of particular significance to local Native American groups. The geographic features are important for their relationship to important events in oral history and ceremony. Some locations are identified as traditional plant gathering areas. As specified in the CDCA Plan (1980, as amended) "data on Native American socio-cultural values will be treated as 'sensitive'..." and the specific results of the sacred lands file search will not be discussed in this document. Areas identified as sensitive, whether as a result of the files search or through Native American consultation, were given consideration in the planning process.